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Summary record of the 49th meeting (Chamber A)
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 July 2018, at 3 p.m.

President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
later: Ms. Chatardova ..... (Czechia)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

(d) Thematic discussion (E/2018/61)

Panel discussion: "Leveraging new technologies for the Sustainable Development Goals"

1. *A short video was shown presenting the work of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on information and communications technology (ICT) for sustainable development.*

2. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of the Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)), moderator, said that technology had the potential to positively impact every Sustainable Development Goal. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation recognized the contribution of digital technologies towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations as a platform for dialogue in the digital age.

3. The spread of ICT could accelerate human progress, bridge the digital divide and develop knowledge societies. New technologies such as artificial intelligence could transform areas as diverse and critical as education, health care, finance, mobility and energy. However, they also posed technical, ethical and socioeconomic challenges. The threat of another digital divide was a matter of concern. The needs of all segments of the population in developing and least developed countries must therefore be taken into account.

4. ITU had hosted two Artificial Intelligence for Good Global Summits to raise awareness of the opportunities and risks associated with such emerging technologies, and to provide a platform for international dialogue. The questions of how to ensure privacy and transparency and make data available to all must also be addressed. ITU had played a central role in the digital transformation, including through its work on international standards. It had also formed partnerships with other United Nations bodies on the United 4 Smart Sustainable Cities initiative and was working with Smart Dubai to develop an index of sustainable cities.

5. New technologies should be leveraged to accelerate progress on every Sustainable Development Goal. Leaving no one behind was central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and efforts must be redoubled to bridge the digital divide at a time of great technological change. Women and girls, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and older persons were disproportionately represented among those with little or no access to ICT. The benefits of digital innovation were crucial in building a more sustainable world. In order to address new opportunities responsibly, discussions on how interdisciplinary and cooperative approaches could facilitate a more inclusive digital future for all were necessary.

6. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana), panellist, said that as the poverty gap in Ghana was the result of a technology gap her Government was committed to prioritizing science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, with an emphasis on socioeconomic activities. The national road map for science, technology and innovation ensured that technology drove the implementation of all national policies and programmes. Significant investments were being made in research and development in order to find solutions to issues of national concern, while contributing to global efforts. Strong partnerships between academic institutions and industry ensured that research outputs were turned into industrial applications, reducing imports and increasing exports, creating jobs and advancing economic growth.

7. Her Government was working to formalize the economy by introducing digitization to operations, land ownership and banking systems, among other measures. Strategies were in place to ensure that the goals of the national road map were met, while supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, by integrating science, technology and innovation into the formulation of policies, and working to address the gap between policy formulation and implementation.

8. Investments in research and development had been scaled up, with the aim of finding local solutions to challenges. An innovation and research commercialization centre had been established, seeking to create strategic opportunities for investment in the latest technological advancements and incentives to support research by the private sector. Ghana was prepared to form partnerships with other countries and organizations to facilitate the sharing of technology and was currently promoting the development of technologies in new and emerging disciplines, including biotechnology, microelectronics and laser technology. Engaging with young people to promote interest in science and technology, particularly among women, was

important. Science, technology and innovation were fundamental to development in Ghana, and her Government was committed to leaving no one behind.

9. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs), panellist, said that the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66) showed that such technologies were changing ways of living and working. The rapid pace of technological change demonstrated the potential to accelerate progress towards the Goals while safeguarding against the associated dangers. Poverty eradication remained the top priority, and technology could be harnessed to work towards its achievement, for example, through innovations in medical technologies and sustainable food systems.

10. Emerging technologies had a far-reaching impact on society, the economy and the environment, and progress in one area of technology fuelled and accelerated progress in others. Nonetheless, the benefits were unequally distributed, and new technologies could bring with them adverse consequences. Automation, artificial intelligence and robotics could lead to unemployment or underemployment, and were associated with concerns over privacy, security and human rights.

11. Notwithstanding the risks, the potential benefits of new technologies were so significant that they could not be ignored. Preparing for the current and future impact of technological change with inclusive and effective policies on technology for sustainable development was crucial. At the national level, countries would need to adapt the supply of skills to the rapidly evolving labour market. Collaborative efforts between stakeholders were necessary and should be guided by commitment to the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations system must continue to support efforts to adapt and harness new technologies for the common good.

12. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University), panellist, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that, notwithstanding the tremendous power of emerging technologies to address global challenges, the non-neutrality inherent in their design and implementation carried the risk of unintended negative consequences and made them vulnerable to manipulation. Consideration of the ethical impact of technology was therefore essential to effectively leveraging emerging technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. In advancing an ethically conscious approach to technological innovation, emphasis must be placed on social inclusion, which required an understanding of the characteristics of affected communities and the power dynamics within them, and of the technical, legal, regulatory and economic contexts in which technologies were implemented. There was also a need for consideration of technology governance frameworks and of identity and privacy issues, in particular personal information requirements for access to online services, given the potential exposure of such information to manipulation and the consequent risk of exploitation of vulnerable populations. In that connection, transparency was essential not only with regard to the data used by algorithms and the biases inherent in their design, but also with regard to ownership and control of data. Efforts must also be made to expand access to digital technologies and improve digital literacy, and to implement effective safety and security measures to protect personal data.

14. International cooperation should be leveraged to promote progress in the areas of digital inclusion, digital rights, data governance and the establishment of standards for the ethical development of technology. In her work as a Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center, she focused on identifying concrete ways to apply ethical standards in implementing technology and had recently directed the development of an ethical framework for the design of blockchain technology.

15. **Mr. Hoshino** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals), lead discussant, said that the 2018 multi-stakeholder forum had focused on how new technologies could be leveraged to achieve specific Goals, taking into account their positive effects and risks.

16. Committed to maximizing the benefits and minimizing the negative impact of technological developments, Japan had introduced two main initiatives to harness new technologies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. The first, Society 5.0, was a plan for achieving a society in which solutions to social problems and the attainment of individual fulfilment were mutually consistent and in line with the Goals. That plan served as a guideline for the implementation of his Government's science and technology policy for the period from 2016 to 2021 and was an integral part of its action plan for the achievement of the Goals. Conceived as the fifth iteration in the history of human social development, following the hunting and gathering, agrarian, industrial, and information societies, Society 5.0 was human-centred and characterized by the advanced integration of social spaces through the implementation

of emerging technologies such as the Internet of things, big data and artificial intelligence. Envisaged innovations included the use of drones and self-driving vehicle systems to improve logistical efficiency and resource distribution, in particular to underpopulated rural areas, and the use of artificial intelligence in patient care and rehabilitation.

17. Society 5.0 was being carried out in partnership with Keidanren, an organization composed of more than 1,300 Japanese companies and underpinned by a code of corporate behaviour, a central pillar of which was the implementation of Society 5.0 for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, Keidanren had recently launched a website showcasing the initiatives undertaken by member companies to harness technological innovations in order to provide goods and services to address the needs of all members of society. The model underlying Society 5.0 had been formulated with consideration of the ethical and human dimensions of technology and could be adapted to many national contexts.

18. Like a number of other Member States, Japan had developed a national road map for advancing science, technology and innovation to support the Sustainable Development Goals. Such road maps provided tools for monitoring progress towards established objectives; for measuring the positive and negative impact of new technologies in order to develop desirable pathways towards achieving the Goals; and for integrating cutting-edge technologies into domestic strategies and policies on the basis of national priorities, using a multidisciplinary approach. The 2018 multi-stakeholder forum had provided an opportunity for Member States to share their experiences in developing and implementing road maps. He particularly welcomed the efforts made by Ghana to promote education and capacity-building in the area of science and technology, including among women. The importance of harnessing traditional and local knowledge had also been emphasized during the forum.

19. Addressing the ethical impact and risks of new technologies required ongoing dialogue among stakeholders. Despite the challenges they presented, science, technology and innovation had played a critical role in protecting populations against natural disasters and in improving human lives. New technologies must be leveraged to ensure the effective use of limited resources in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals), lead discussant, said that, although it had been transforming the global landscape for some time, technological innovation was a new issue on the United Nations agenda. At a time of unprecedented optimism among Member States about the opportunities afforded by new technologies, those opportunities must be leveraged in support of development. He also welcomed the initiatives undertaken by Ghana in that regard and highlighted the experience of Mexico in implementing a project to assist indigenous women in processing organic agave syrup through the use of solar energy.

21. As emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66), the benefits provided and challenges posed by emerging technologies with regard to economic and social development and environmental protection must be assessed. Guided by the Goals and targets, Member States must be proactive in responding to technological change, including by adjusting education systems and training programmes to meet the demands of the digital age; investing in innovation; and implementing technology strategies providing for the allocation of funding for scientific training, in particular for youth and women.

22. To minimize the disruptive effect of technological change on operations and service delivery, Governments must build resilience by exploring different ways of increasing their productivity, as well as economic productivity, and by establishing innovative systems to capitalize on new technologies. As highlighted by the Secretary-General, the challenges associated with the use of labour-saving technology must be addressed not by impeding the development of such technology but by adapting it to existing working methods and social contexts.

23. By providing capacity-building, compiling and disseminating information on best practices and promoting joint solutions, the United Nations, and the Council in particular, played a critical role in advancing international cooperation in the formulation of public policies to leverage technology for development. In that regard, as proposed during the 2018 multi-stakeholder forum, the Organization should establish a database of policies that had enabled effective resilience in the face of technological change. The ethical implications of new technologies must also be taken into consideration, without hindering innovation.

24. As underscored by the Secretary-General, United Nations platforms must adapt to facilitate discussions by

Member States and other stakeholders on frameworks, good practices and areas in which protocols, principles or other mechanisms or incentives were required. The multi-stakeholder forum, the Internet Governance Forum and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development provided valuable platforms for debate among a broad range of stakeholders. Forums such as the Artificial Intelligence for Global Good Summit, the Blockchain Summit series and the Global Sustainable Technology and Innovation Conference were also important to advancing global dialogue on critical issues.

25. Technology and innovation were indispensable to sustainable development. Drawing on evidence-based analysis, stakeholders must craft public policies to advance the well-being of all people, while preventing duplication of efforts and the scattering of resources.

26. **Ms. Blanco** (Director of Public Policy and International Relations, Global System for Mobile Communications Association), lead discussant, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that there had been a dramatic transformation in the available means of communication since the 1990s. Whereas earlier means of accessing information had been restricted to newspaper, radio and television, and then to somewhat unreliable and at times irrelevant Internet content and prohibitively expensive mobile technology, now 5 billion people had access to mobile technology. Current mobile technologies were helping to reverse exclusion from social dynamics. Certain technologies, such as 5G, blockchain and artificial intelligence, could be harnessed to create more resilient, egalitarian and inclusive societies and would allow development organizations to strengthen the efficiency of their programmes, reach wider audiences with fewer resources and optimize the experience of their beneficiaries and donors.

27. Although there were risks inherent to an increasingly digital, wireless world, concerted action and strong collaboration among the private sector, Governments and the multilateral system could help to stem such threats as the weaponization of data and the inequalities exacerbated by a growing digital divide. ICT and mobile technologies had proved their place in capitalizing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Rather than stopping the international community, risks should fuel collaboration around common goals.

28. The Global System for Mobile Communications Association stood ready to continue decisive action towards achieving sustainable development and the worldwide implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; however, that work could not be done in isolation. Governments were needed to create enabling policy environments for investment and innovation. The private sector already possessed a repository of best practices that was available in multiple languages and arranged by topic, country and region. The private sector should continue exploring how to place that material in the service of Governments and the United Nations. The private sector also needed the United Nations system to support its efforts, particularly at the local level, to reach the most vulnerable, and to better inform citizens and Member States how technology could be harnessed to deliver on the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.

29. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) recalled early work done in the 1980s when the potential of technology to influence social and economic development was first recognized. Remarkably, the 1985 report of the Maitland Commission, entitled: "The Missing Link", had noted that three quarters of the 600 million fixed-line phones in the world were concentrated in just nine countries. The findings of the report had spurred international dialogue, leading to the formulation of targets and setting the stage for dramatic change.

30. **Ms. Martinez** (Mexico) said that there was a need for digital transformation agendas to become State policies with the same relevance as education, health and employment. It was also important to adopt such new technologies as blockchain and artificial intelligence, focusing on context and challenges.

31. A white paper on artificial intelligence, drafted by her Government with the support of the private sector and academia, had prioritized the following: incorporating artificial intelligence in the customization and personalization of public services, based on the needs and preferences of individuals; aligning all research and development programmes with the potential use of artificial intelligence in economic and social sectors; building capacities for the jobs of the future; and strengthening the national data infrastructure, as well as frameworks to study the ethical use of artificial intelligence. In August, Mexico would launch an initiative to create a platform to document cases in which technology had been used efficiently, transparently and accountably. Mexico wished to share its initiatives with the international community so that together they could strengthen mechanisms of cooperation between Member States for the future.

32. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana) said that there was a critical need to leverage local and new

technologies. In so doing, the international community should identify the opportunities created, examine any associated risks and develop the human capacities necessary to ensure the appropriate application of the relevant technologies.

33. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University) said that new technologies offered a promising future and the international community should not lose sight of that fact in its discussions of how to minimize potentially harmful technologies. Instead, the focus should be placed on how ubiquitous and affordable technologies could be leveraged for the good of the many. The goal was never to create harmful technology; rather, the point was to connect millions of people to systems to which they previously did not have access.

34. Local solutions were another critical component. Despite differences in context, some of the challenges were universal. Although views differed as to what exactly constituted ethical actions, efforts to develop technology ethically should be intentional and context-specific. The objective was to maximize the social impact of technology, and the boundaries of that technology must be drawn to include people. The most interesting things happened at the intersection between technology and people.

35. **Ms. Blanco** (Director of Public Policy and International Relations, Global System for Mobile Communications Association) said that there could be cultural as well as context-specific reasons why people who had access to certain technologies were not using them. For example, in some countries cultural barriers might discourage women from using mobile phones or the high costs of mobile applications might deter people from paying to download them. In the latter case, the public and private sectors could work together to devise more affordable options.

36. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals) said that there were two clear paths ahead. One pertained to the Sustainable Development Goals and the challenges inherent to achieving the 169 targets. The second path pertained to the principles of regulation, codes of conduct and principles of ethics. He welcomed the fact that the central issues presently under discussion, which had hitherto been discussed in a marginal way, were now at the forefront of the Organization's work.

37. **Mr. Hoshino** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals) said that Society 5.0 was value-oriented and ethics-driven. Although profit-oriented, Japanese companies agreed that the Sustainable Development Goals could be achieved through a combination of technology and business. Mainstreaming the Goals in business activities and collaboration between public and private sectors in a value-driven and ethics-oriented way would naturally contribute to a better society.

38. It was important to capture the positive results of science and technology, pre-empt any negative impact that could be caused by technologies and consider how to make the best use of science and technology. He urged the international community to move from dialogue to action. A road map to contextualize sustainable development indicators was one way to put ideas into practice.

39. **Mr. Ahmad** (Observer for the Islamic Development Bank) said that the Islamic Development Bank served 57 countries, all of which were considered developing countries. It had launched a $500 million technology fund intended to finance innovative ideas to achieve six of the Sustainable Development Goals. It had also launched a digital platform to feed into the pipeline of the projects intended to transform the fund. He asked the panellists to address the issue of financing, how the ideas expressed during the meeting could be funded, and how to find more effective financing mechanisms.

40. **Mr. De Vasijani** (France) said that technologies had the power to transform societies and economies. However, tackling certain challenges was not entirely a question of technology. Technologies were often presented from an economic or social standpoint, with their technical and ethical risks thoroughly explored but their potential impact on health and the environment often overlooked. For example, in terms of health care, one might consider the effects of using certain materials. Was anyone present incorporating that dimension into their work? Ultimately, the 2030 Agenda was a holistic and comprehensive agenda. In the context of the three pillars of sustainable development, it was important not to forget the environmental viability of the technologies being harnessed for the benefit of people.

41. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that her organization was working very closely with a variety of international governmental organizations on digital

health, e-skills programmes and the use of technology to reduce hunger, among other initiatives.

42. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University) said that technology should not be looked at in isolation. It was important to understand the entire complex landscape surrounding a technology, including its financing, and to bring together as many different people, organizations and backgrounds as necessary to achieve the intended outcome.

43. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana) said that Governments should make a conscious effort to assign 30 per cent of their resources to research and development activities. For its part, her Government had identified people who implemented local technology, including one innovator who extracted electricity from cassava. Such people should be encouraged financially. Ghana was also looking at innovative e-health programmes and a medication-sharing system. With respect to environmental concerns, her Government had been deploying drones to pre-empt further deterioration of already degraded lands. It was also considering using drones to cultivate land for a variety of other programmes.

The meeting was suspended at 5.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2, E/2018/L.23 and E/2018/L.28)

Adoption of the draft ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Council (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2)

44. *Ms. Chatardova (Czechia) took the Chair.*

45. **The President** drew attention to the draft ministerial declaration of the Council's 2018 high-level political forum on the themes "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" and "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2). She said that the draft ministerial declaration contained no programme budget implications.

46. The United States delegation had submitted a total of four amendments: two amendments to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.23, and two amendments to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.28.

47. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Chair of the Group of 77 and China, whose delegation was not currently a member of the Council, requested a recorded vote on the proposed amendments to paragraphs 28 and 12 of the draft ministerial declaration.

48. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 was intended to protect the fundamental principles of sustainable development. The Council should not consent to language that promoted development cooperation as a quid pro quo between developing countries and their development partners.

49. *A recorded vote was taken on the first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.23.*

In favour:

Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam.

50. *The first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration was rejected by 31 votes to 14, with no abstentions.*

51. **The President** drew attention to the second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23.

52. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 would ensure that the draft ministerial declaration was aligned with the April 2018 outcome from the forum on financing for development follow-up. The Council must respect the independence of the World Trade Organization (WTO) from the United Nations system. In addition, the amendment properly referenced

the 2030 Agenda and the important role of trade in promoting sustainable development.

53. *A recorded vote was taken on the second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23.*

In favour:

United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Japan, Republic of Korea.

54. *The second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23, was rejected by 42 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.*

55. **The President** drew attention to the first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28.

56. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the ministerial declaration would remove the reference to the "right to development", which was a concept with no internationally-agreed meaning. Furthermore, there were challenges to making any such right consistent with the fundamental human rights recognized by the international community as universal.

57. *A recorded vote was taken on the first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28.*

In favour:

United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

58. *The first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28, was rejected by 31 votes to 1, with 14 abstentions.*

59. **The President** drew attention to the second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28.

60. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration would remove language inserted by certain delegations on foreign occupation that unnecessarily politicized the declaration.

61. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that her delegation supported the proposed amendment, as paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration contained politicized language that served those who aimed to single out Israel. As Israel had stated repeatedly throughout the negotiations and on past occasions, such language did not belong in the discussions of the Council or the high-level political forum.

62. *A recorded vote was taken on the second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28.*

In favour:

Canada, United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Belgium, Chad, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

63. *The second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28, was rejected by 30 votes to 2, with 14 abstentions.*

64. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested by the delegation of the Russian Federation on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

65. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was committed to the empowerment of women and girls, the protection of their rights and elimination of all forms of violence. The 2030 Agenda set precise guidelines for cooperation and did not need to be modified. The Russian delegation deeply regretted that, during the negotiations on the draft ministerial declaration, there had been a deviation from the principle of transparency and the necessary efforts had not been made to take the views of all groups of States into consideration. In particular, paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration contained language that was not in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5 or the agreed outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women. It also deviated from international consensus on the topic. The Russian Federation could therefore not support the adoption of paragraph 16. Drawing attention to the fruitless nature of attempts by certain States to impose their approaches to gender on other States, he called for delegations to reject paragraph 16 and to search for solutions based on constructive and mutually respectful dialogue.

66. **Mr. Cripton** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay, said that his delegation wished to reiterate the statement that it had delivered with respect to the vote on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration at the 24th meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. He urged all members of the Council to vote in favour of retaining the paragraph.

67. *A recorded vote was taken on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

Against:

Belarus, Guyana, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Chad, China, Iraq.

68. *Paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2, was adopted by 35 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.*

69. **The President** drew attention to the draft ministerial declaration as a whole, as contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

70. **Ms. Crabtree** (Turkey) said that her delegation dissociated itself from the fifth sentence of paragraph 23 of the draft ministerial declaration, which failed to reflect the scope that had been agreed under target 6.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals and in fact went beyond the agreed language. Turkey had conveyed a suggested replacement text to the President of the Council, as a compromise solution. Regrettably, that attempt to fairly and appropriately reflect the relevant Goal had not received the support of certain States and groups. Turkey was fully committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and its cross-cutting nature required the adoption of a fair approach in all respects.

71. *At the request of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on the draft ministerial*

declaration as a whole, as contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

United States of America.

Abstaining:

None.

72. *The draft ministerial declaration as a whole was adopted by 46 votes to 1, with no abstentions.*

73. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her delegation deeply regretted the fact that a Member State had requested a recorded vote on the entire document. Venezuela supported the declaration and wished to reiterate certain fundamental points. Sovereign use of natural resources was critical for the economic and social development of peoples, as was the fair distribution of the benefits of natural resources among citizens. The implementation of coercive unilateral measures against States was an obstacle to development that not only violated the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but was also inconsistent with the principles of equal rights among States, self-determination of peoples, non-intervention in internal affairs and the inalienable right of all States to choose their own political, economic and cultural systems. Venezuela had itself suffered from the imposition of such measures and called for the cessation of policies aimed at changing the country's legitimately constituted Government.

74. Venezuela also wished to reiterate its reservation to target 12.c of the Sustainable Development Goals, as its reference to the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies was interventionist and interfered in the public policies of States. Venezuela would not accept any interference in its energy policy.

75. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that throughout the negotiating process, his delegation had offered numerous amendments in a spirit of compromise. It therefore regretted the need to call for a vote and to vote against the declaration owing to inappropriate language on foreign occupation and trade, the elevation of an inappropriate development model and the domestic policy rhetoric of a single Member State.

76. While his delegation recognized that development facilitated the enjoyment of human rights, there was no agreed definition of the "right to development" and such a right could not easily be made consistent with the fundamental human rights recognized by the international community. All development, including sustainable development, must be undertaken in a manner consistent with human rights. There were no circumstances in which development goals permitted countries to deviate from their human rights obligations and commitments. His delegation therefore continued to encourage all States to fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments regardless of their level of development.

77. Given its strong support for conflict prevention, human rights promotion and good governance, his delegation was very disappointed that it was unable to reach an agreement with its partners and that certain Member States had once again sought to politicize development issues at the United Nations by including language on foreign occupation in the declaration.

78. With respect to references to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate, he noted that the United States of America had announced its intention to withdraw from the Agreement unless suitable terms for reengagement were identified.

79. The United States of America disassociated itself from the language in paragraphs 24 and 28 of the declaration to that extent that it encouraged financial assistance to the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and characterized technology transfer that was not clearly indicated to be both voluntary and on mutually-agreed terms. Any such language would have no standing in future negotiations. His delegation continued to oppose language that would undermine intellectual property rights.

80. His delegation reiterated its objections to the reference to "mutually beneficial cooperation" in paragraph 28. The terms "win-win cooperation" and "mutually beneficial cooperation" had been promoted interchangeably by a single Member State with a view to inserting its domestic policy agenda into United Nations contexts. As a result, those terms had become synonymous with a model of development that was dangerous to sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

81. The United States of America also objected to the language on trade contained in paragraph 28. His delegation did not view the United Nations as the appropriate body to opine on WTO and did not support references to WTO matters in United Nations documents. Furthermore, it was not acceptable for Member States to attempt to prescribe the appropriate characteristics of an international organization that was independent of the United Nations system or to comment on the membership of that international organization.

82. His delegation noted that the 2030 Agenda called for countries to implement the Agenda in a manner consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law. Implementation must respect and be without prejudice to the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including negotiations, and did not prejudge or serve as a precedent for decisions and actions under way in other forums. For example, the 2030 Agenda did not represent a commitment to provide new market access for goods or services. Nor did it interpret or alter any WTO agreement or decision, including the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property.

83. With respect to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, much of the trade-related language in the outcome document was obsolete. It was therefore immaterial, and the reaffirmation of that document had no standing for ongoing work in negotiations involving trade.

84. His delegation reiterated its support for disaster risk reduction initiatives, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Such assistance helped recipients to build a culture of greater preparedness, promote greater resilience and achieve self-reliance.

85. Lastly, he wished to underscore that the ministerial declaration was non-binding and neither created rights and obligations under international law, nor gave rise to financial commitments.

86. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that her delegation regretted that language proposed by the Group of 77 and China from paragraph 38 of the document entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which reaffirmed the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States, had not been included in the ministerial declaration. During the negotiations, the Group had strongly favoured reinforcing the language in the section on the means of implementation and making proper reference to the principles enshrined in the 2030 Agenda. Those principles were also contained in many agreed multilateral outcomes. Although the text of the ministerial declaration did not fulfil all of her delegation's aspirations, it had decided to vote in favour of the document in a spirit of multilateralism.

87. **Mr. Lu** Yuhui (China) said that his delegation regretted that the entire ministerial declaration had been put to a vote, including the consensus language on the 2030 Agenda. The declaration reaffirmed the need to promote a universal and equitable multilateral trade system under WTO as well as meaningful trade liberalization measures, language that served the interests of all Member States. Trade was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and vital to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

88. Any challenges that emerged in the course of the development process must be resolved through development. Similarly, any issues that arose as a result of globalization must be resolved by moving globalization forward in the right direction towards more openness, inclusivity, balance, universal benefit and win-win outcomes. All countries should hold fast to the principle of mutual benefit and intensify mutually beneficial cooperation.

89. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation supported the adoption of the ministerial declaration, with the exception of paragraph 16 thereof. With respect to the wording in paragraph 17, which concerned the participation of children in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, his delegation believed that children who had not yet reached the legal age of majority should engage in such participation solely within the framework of their respective families and schools.

90. His delegation noted with disappointment that the ministerial declaration had not once been adopted by consensus in the three preceding years and that, in each of those years, there had been an increase in the number of votes on separate paragraphs. A vote on the declaration as a whole was even more unfortunate. Moreover, while Member States had constantly been urged to improve the work of the Charter bodies of the United Nations, such as the Council, States had actively been departing from the precedents that had been developed by their predecessors over many years. In particular, there had been a long-standing tradition that a resolution would be put forward for adoption by the President of the Council only if it enjoyed universal support, and, in cases where such consensus had not been reached, the resolution would instead be put forward by an interested party. That tradition had been abandoned.

91. **Mr. Elkhishin** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group had negotiated constructively and in good faith to arrive at a balanced and substantive outcome document. It had presented comprehensive and concrete proposals during the informal consultations and had also stressed that eradicating poverty, ending hunger and ensuring food security were indispensable for achieving sustainable development.

92. The Group reaffirmed that the ambitious nature of the 2030 Agenda required strong means of implementation, particularly for developing countries, and the creation of an enabling global environment for development. It also reaffirmed the need to address the diverse needs of countries in special situations, in particular African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in conflict, as well as the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries. The Group regretted that some of its proposals had not been incorporated in the ministerial declaration. In that context, reaffirming the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of States, the Group urged States to refrain from promulgating or applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law or the Charter of the United Nations.

93. While the Group had decided to accept the final version of the ministerial declaration, it was extremely disappointed not only that amendments had been proposed at a very late stage, after the negotiations had already concluded and the text had been circulated for adoption, but also that votes had been requested on certain paragraphs. Such actions sent a negative political message regarding collective endeavours to ensure follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

94. The Group reaffirmed the right to development and called for further effective measures to be taken, in accordance with international law, to remove obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples under colonial and foreign occupation. It would continue to promote a universal, rule-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trade system under WTO, as well as meaningful trade liberalization.

95. Three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, there were worrying signs regarding the commitment of the international community to sustainable development. The vote against the adoption of the ministerial declaration by one State was a particular cause for concern.

96. **Ms. Giungi** (Observer for the Holy See) said that her delegation believed that the high-level segment and the high-level political forum were critical in assisting Governments and stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda and ensure that no one was left behind. It regretted that consensus on the ministerial declaration had not been reached, as that principle was integral to success.

97. While affirming the intention of the ministerial declaration, her delegation wished to place on record its reservations to certain concepts contained therein. First, any references to gender and gender equality were understood to be grounded in biological identity that was either male or female, an idea reinforced by the numerous references in the 2030 Agenda to both sexes. Second, the Holy See did not accept the idea that gender was a social construct and disassociated itself from the biological determinist notion that that all gender roles and relations were fixed.

98. Lastly, while the Holy See welcomed the focus on children and youth in paragraph 17 of the ministerial declaration, it was concerned that no reference was made to parents, as their rights and duties must also be taken into account.

99. **The President** invited the Council to take note, under agenda item 5 as a whole, of the World Economic and Social Survey 2018: Frontier technologies for sustainable development (E/2018/50); the report of the Secretary-General on trends and progress in international development cooperation (E/2018/55); the report of the Secretary-General entitled "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" (E/2018/61); the World economic situation and prospects as of mid-2018 (E/2018/63); the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64); the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66); and the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Discussions held during the twenty-first session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the theme of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council, 'From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities'" (E/2018/71).

100. *It was so decided.*

Closing of the segment

101. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the debates on

the Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum had been evidence-based and thorough. Participants had shared both their success stories and their challenges, which had led to a better understanding of the remaining implementation gaps. That knowledge would help to focus efforts in the coming year. The momentum created by the forum was already being channelled into tangible policy improvements and concrete measures.

102. Greater attention must be paid to the potential impact of technological and demographic changes on every aspect of society. He welcomed the fact that the General Assembly would soon decide to refocus the high-level segment on long-term trends and scenarios, as it was important for there to be a forum where Governments could meet to discuss the future.

103. The following year, the high-level political forum would meet not only in July but also in September, at which point it would review the 2030 Agenda in its entirety.

104. **The President**, highlighting a number of key messages emanating from the Council's deliberations during the segment, said that the Council's engagement, deliberations and policy recommendations would accelerate efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Throughout 2018, the Council's segments and forums and its functional commissions and expert bodies had worked to provide integrated policy options and recommendations, address gaps and contribute to the overall review of progress towards implementation.

105. The high-level segment had also included the ministerial segment of the high-level political forum, the apex global forum for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. All the discussions had reiterated that the 2030 Agenda demanded new ways of thinking and working. Building resilience and sustainability meant that local communities must be engaged. An inclusive approach to policymaking led to better outcomes, with stronger support in implementation, monitoring and review of progress. The Council had considered forward-looking perspectives and ideas that could address the challenges arising from negative trends and trajectories. It had also investigated the potential of new technologies in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

106. Although the high-level segment had made clear that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was uneven, the Council had identified certain bottlenecks and obstacles. Member States must now work together in an inclusive manner to overcome them.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.